

The
Curry Arts Journal



1996

Table of Contents

Untitled by Denis Keenan	page 2
I'm a Snake by A.J. Rand	page 5
"A Cold Winter's Day in January, 1993" by Keith Moore	page 7
By Dawn by Ben Greenwald	page 8
Random Thinking by Cartsten T. Aretz	page 9
She Likes to Dance by Rachel Bernard	page 10
A Clean Glass of Pure Scotch by Kerry Corrigan	page 11
Why did you leave? by Jim Inzirillo	page 14
Untitled by Jen Oliveira	page 15
Wings by Thomas Joyce	page 18
I Don't Need You by Kim Porcello	page 28
Death of the Goddess by Curtiss B. Hickcox III	page 29
Daddy's Little Girl by Kristina Arria	page 32
A Strange Dark Place by Rebecca Berger	page 34
Graduation by Jennifer Tramposch	page 38

Untitled

by Denis Keenan

It was November of 1986 in the small town of Rockland, Massachusetts. There was very little light radiating from the sky, thus causing a dark-like morning with some rain which started to drizzle down. It was almost eleven o'clock in the morning and it was football weather at Rockland's Memorial Stadium. Spectators could feel the tension for it was the eight and nine year old Superbowl match-up between Rockland and Plymouth. Eleven o'clock came and the referee blew his whistle. This was the signal for the captains to meet at half-field for the coin toss. I, Dennis Keenan, had butterflies rapidly floating in my stomach because we had been rated as the underdogs. Plymouth had already beaten us twice in the regular season and now it was time for revenge. Oh, how badly we could taste it, because we were determined not to get embarrassed for a third time. We worked this hard and no one was going to stop us now.

This was an important game for me because I had not caught a ball all year and, during this final game, I would be the key player. My coaches wanted me holding the ball. This game was so important because, not only was it the championship game, I had lost my grandfather earlier in the year. This was the game that "Papa" was definitely waiting to attend. I did not want to go because the game now seemed so pointless to me. My father, also my coach, pushed me and told me that this was a once in a lifetime deal. With that, I knew that I could not let my grandfather or the team down. So, I began to mentally prepare myself.

We had just received bad news. We were kicking off to Plymouth, and they had the best returner in the league; known as Tyrone "Speed" Jefferson. The teams gathered around their coaches for one last pep talk and we ended it screaming "Dog Day Is Heaven Day." This was to reassure Plymouth that we had no doubts about the military readiness and were ready to play.

Over the loud speaker came, "Ladies and Gentlemen please rise for our National Anthem." With that, everyone stood and the music began. The thoughts running through our heads were full of anxiety and disbelief that we actually made it this far. No one in the stands, not even our own parents, could believe that lil' Rockland had come so far. The anthem was over and it was time for some hard-hitting, bone crunching action. At the kickoff we were underway, I remember the announcer saying, "This first quarter has seen a lot of tough defense, thus causing the reason for a slow offensive

game." On Plymouth's second set of downs, "the quarterback dropped back to pass and throws it over to his right side for a possible five yard gain. Instead, out of nowhere comes #58 and he just completely levels the wide receiver for a loss of two yards." This was the best play in the first quarter made by, yours truly.

In the second quarter we saw more excitement, we had a sizzling offense and crunching defense. The play that was superb was when Tyrone ran 86 yards down the field with jets on his sides. The only problem was, that he tripped over his feet and fell flat on his face - right out of bounds. Going into halftime, this was a redemption for us because the score was still tied at zero-zero.

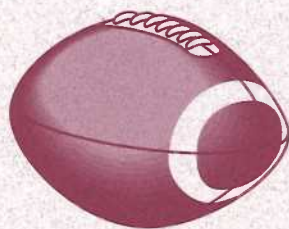
Going into the third quarter, the fans could still feel the adrenaline coming from both teams. There was still much excitement in the air because it was such a close game between these two rough and tough teams. It started like the other two quarters, a slow paced action where both teams were still getting used to the field and opposition. The coach for Rockland finally decided it was time to use the good-old "Dennis the Menace Pass." He felt that we could catch Plymouth off guard, and boy did we ever. I figured that since the play was named after me, it was my turn to show these dudes how football is really played.

"As Rockland lines up, they have one receiver on the left side and it looks like that is who they are going to.

"So, the quarterback threw it to me and I got seven yards on the play. We rushed to line up for our next play, another pass. It was completed to me and I gained six more yards with one man to beat. Instead, luckily for Plymouth, he tripped me up and I fell right on my head. While this happened to me, our running back went down with a hip injury and our quarterback got a sprained finger. Chris, our running back, would not be able to return, but we needed no extra help for now.

As the clock ticked down in the third quarter, we decided to try the pass play one more time. This time it worked wonders as I caught the ball and went sixteen yards. Going these yards, with a man holding onto my leg, I reached my destiny - the endzone. The crowd erupted as we scored to go up six to zero. Our extra point attempt was no good but it did not matter because we were still winning. The quarter ended on a good note as we held onto this slim lead. The fourth quarter was all defense for Rockland, as Plymouth tried everything in the books to score. We held our ground and would not budge. The last play of the game topped the entire thing off. As Plymouth tried one last Hail Mary, I fought for the interception with the biggest kid on their team. I finally pulled it away from him and that ended the game. Rockland was the 1986 Superbowl Champs.

As I look back, I now realize how much excitement was involved in that game. For me, and my teammates, that was a hell of a game. I now understand that I made that last spectacular touchdown play for my "Papa in Heaven." I am pretty sure that my Grandfather was the extra driving force that helped me get that touchdown. Thinking back to that day, I wish he could have been there, but I realize that he was there in spirit.



I'm a Snake

by A.J. Rand

Swirling above her body now,
I find a world away from her pain,
in another brain,
in the mind of a snake.
I am cold and dusty,
but alive,
and that's good enough in this
Reptile House.
If I am alive,
I will survive.
I will crawl this trail
Until my belly bleeds.

"A Cold Winter's Day in January, 1993"

by Keith Moore

I remember the day I had heard that he had passed away. It was six o'clock in the morning, and the phone was ringing. The ring seemed louder at six a.m. than it did later in the day. It must have been the fifth ring before I finally answered it, jumping down from the top bunk to get it because my roommate didn't hear it or simply refused to answer. As I picked up the phone, I rubbed my achy eyes that attempted to focus on the newly fallen snow that I stared at through the foggy, dusty windows.

"Hello," I said, with a scratchy morning voice. The voice on the other end was my mother's. I could hardly hear her "hello" over the noise of the clearing of my own throat. She sounded distraught through the phone that I had just realized was freezing because my ear was becoming raw. I asked her what was wrong, even though I already knew what the call was pertaining to. My cousin Terry had been missing for five days, and my family was an emotional wreck. We hoped and prayed that he was okay. Deep in my heart, I thought that he was. He was twenty-one years old and a senior at Cornell University in New York. He was not a trouble-maker, and I could not imagine anything happening to him because he was so innocent.

The first I had heard about his disappearance was after he had already been missing for three days. It was a Monday and he had not been heard from since the previous Friday. I said to my relatives that he probably met some girl at a bar and went away for the weekend on one of those freaky college hook-ups with someone whose name you wouldn't remember come class on Monday. But that weekend was very special to Terry because it was Rush weekend on Cornell's campus. My cousin had been looking forward to it because he was in competition with his other fraternity brothers in Sigma Alpha Mu to see who would recruit the most freshman.

Rush weekend came and went, and there was still no word from Terry. His father, a State Trooper from Massachusetts, went to New York with his brother and a few of my uncles to search for his son with the help of the New York State Police. They stayed for two days, searching day and night, and there was still no trace of Terry. However, they did turn up information of some use. According to

one of Terry's frat brothers, he had left a local bar around eleven thirty that evening by himself. He told his friends that he would be walking home alone to the fraternity house and that he would meet them there later. That was the last anyone had seen of my cousin.

My mother's voice cracked as she sobbed on the other end, and my heart melted as the first of many tears rolled down my cheek. She said in a soft, but relieved, voice that they had found my cousin, but I knew by her tone that he was not found alive. I tried to hold back, fighting the tears by squinting my eyes and tightening my jaw. I refused to break. I managed to say a few words without totally losing it. "Where was he?" I muttered, as I closed my eyes in anticipation of my mother's reply.

My mother's answer will ring in my mind for the rest of my life. "In a chimney," she said, "in a chimney."

I could not help it. I totally lost it. The dam had broken, and I began to bawl. My mother let me get over the initial shock by not speaking for a moment and then she tried to console me with her caring, motherly voice. She told me that Terry had apparently crawled down the chimney of a rival fraternity house to play practical joke. He was obviously intoxicated, and they say that he probably died of asphyxiation or hypothermia. I told her that I would come home as soon as possible to be with the family and hung up the phone.

It was quarter past six in the morning, and my life was altered significantly. I don't know how I pulled it off, but eventually I fell back to sleep, crying and thinking of all the great memories I had of my cousin Terry. All the summers we spent together on family vacations to Hampton Beach. The time I made root-beer come out of his nose seven consecutive times by making him laugh. Most of all I remembered the times we shared as children, and how we thought that it would never end. But without warning the end came, on a cold winter's day in January, 1993.

"In memory of my cousin, Terrence Ward Quinn"
September 15, 1971 - January 18, 1993



By Dawn

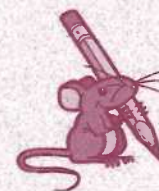
by Ben Greenwald

The sun sets
in your eyes;
I see the last glimmer
of the moon.
The night,
on the wings
of angels.
Your face,
my heart,
soars into
that new sky.
By dawn,
the dream
of the
night has ended.
Chased away
by the light
of a newfound day.

Random Thinking

by Carsten T. Aretz

Roses are red violets are blue,
violets are blue, roses are red.
Is that what I just said?
The dog needs to be fed.
Abraham Lincoln's dead.
I knew a kid named Jed.
It isn't smart to hang around a room full of lead.
What the hell's going on with my head?
I think I should just go to bed,
but I'm not tired.
I hope my dad doesn't get fired.
Killing oneself is nothing to be admired.
OK, now I'm tired.



feelings.

"Yes, it has." Jackie sat down then on the steps of the porch and Joey followed suit. There they were, he in his black suit from Jordan Marsh and Jackie in a black dress that hung to her ankles. He looked her over a little then. The dress was fitted to her small body. It had ruffles on the sleeves and she was wearing a gold anklet. She wore her hair down and the curls bounced around her small oval face. It was the face of an angel, the face that had never left his dreams in all these years.

"He died of a heart attack, right in his favorite chair in the dinning room."

"I heard. He was such a great man; he was like a father to me. I remember growing up on the block. He taught me how to throw a curve ball."

"Yeah, your curve blew me away in the playoffs that season, but my fastball was a lot better than yours."

They were silent for a moment then, both remembering their childhood and Joey's Dad.

"Are you still working for that ad agency in town, Joey?"

"Yeah, but I'm not sure what's going to happen now. My mother is taking this pretty hard. We all are."

"I'm sorry Joey, if there is anything that I can do to help, please let me know, okay? I'm in town for a few days."

"I will thanks." He thought about his mother then and the shape she was in over his father's death, it being so sudden. He knew that he was going to have to stay here a while and sort everything out for her, which meant taking a leave of absence at work. His sponsor was also worried about him, his life was just getting in order and this could bring him down.

"Joey, are you O.K.?" Jackie seemed worried about him, she was always concerned about how others were doing, never herself.

"I'm fine, just a lot on my mind nowadays."

"Do you want to get out of here for a while? Go for a walk maybe?" He thought a walk would be a great idea. It would give him a chance to be alone with Jackie. His father's death had made a lot of things clear to him. There was a lot he wanted her to know.

They got up off the porch, and Joey looked around the yard at all the familiar faces, then at Jackie. Joey had thought about Jackie over the years. In actuality, he had always wanted her back. He realized now that she was more to him than just a memory in his past, but a lot of years had now come between them. He wondered if those years mattered. She touched his arm as they walked. He took it as a sign. He knew Jackie still had those same feelings. Chills ran up his spine as he tried to figure out in his mind

what he would say to her.

"Jackie, I've been thinking about you, about us, high school, college. We had such a great time back then."

"Joey, listen I..."

"No, just let me finish. I've gone through a lot in the past couple of years. Things you probably have no idea about. But seeing you here today, just makes me realize that it's still there, I still love you Jackie. I think you feel it too."

"I've never stopped Joey. But you're right, a number of things have happened in the past years."

"My father's death has brought me to see that I need to be happy. I know we could be happy. It wouldn't be like before, I really want to make it work."

"I can't."

"Jackie, you wouldn't of come here today if you didn't have some feelings for me. Don't deny it, there's still something there." Joey was touching her now, trying in some way to let all that he felt for her come through his hands. But nothing happened, Jackie wasn't responding.

"For months, I kept telling myself you'd call, we'd get back together and live happily ever after. But nothing."

"That was then, this is now. This isn't easy for me to say, but I..."

"Before you go on, I have to tell you, that I met someone, he makes me very happy. And Joey, we're getting married this September."

"Excuse me?" What was she saying, she couldn't be serious?

"I'm sorry, I just needed to tell you."

"Then why did you come here today?"

"Because I loved your dad and I wanted to see you."

Joey looked around their old neighborhood. It seemed like it was a hundred years ago when he was picking her up for a date. His life turned out to be a mess: his father's death, his alcohol problem, and now Jackie, his great last hope, was getting married.

"Joey, say something."

Joey turned around then, and started to walk away from her, his father's funeral and maybe even his life. He had no destination, just an image of pure scotch in a clean glass. Joey thought back to all the people in his yard missing his father. "If I walk long enough, will they miss me?"

He heard Jackie yelling to him, but he never looked back.

Why did you leave?

by Jim Inzirillo

You left me alone.
You had so much in life.
I have a pain in my back
where you put the knife.
I knew you were confused
and
didn't know what you were doing.
I can't help but be bitter.
That's it, my life's in ruin.
My problems have just started
While yours are at an end.
I wish I could have been there.
All I can do now is defend.
They should take me
for how I feel,
Not how I react.
If all you want is a smile,
I'll continue to act.



Untitled

by Jen Oliveira

Emma stormed out of the house and jumped into her new green Volvo. She could hardly wait to see her dearest friend Amanda. The two met at Harvard and became instant friends. They spent so much time together, people actually thought they were lesbians. But, the rumor quickly disappeared when Emma met Nick. When Emma married Nick, Amanda was her maid of honor. And when Emma had twins, Amanda was there helping her deliver them. Nick wasn't even there. He had to attend a medical convention in Kansas City. The two women shared a close bond and their friendship was made up of all the great things friendships are supposed to be made up of.

It was close to a thirty minute drive into the city where Amanda lived. Amanda was extremely successful in her career. She was a screenwriter and was constantly busy. That's probably why, at the age of 36 she wasn't even close to being engaged. Unlike Emma, she didn't want to be married, she didn't want children, and she most definitely didn't want to have a serious relationship. She had many one night stands and affairs with married men. She could have had any man she wanted because of her good looks, her witty personality and success. However, she stayed away from men who wanted a serious relationship. Amanda would always say to Emma, "I want a man who will leave by 8:00 a.m and stay the hell out of my business." She didn't like to be told what to do or how to do something. Emma knew this about her and never questioned her or tried to be her mother. Emma just thought that if her friend was happy, that was all that mattered.

Emma didn't agree with some of Amanda's actions, but all she could think of was what a wonderful friend she was. Amanda would do anything for Emma, and she was there for her when Nick cheated on her with his promiscuous accountant and also when her father died. It really didn't matter what she wanted to do because the love Emma had for Amanda was unconditional.

Emma parked her car in a parking lot. Then she walked three or four blocks to Amanda's apartment building.

"Hi, Joel. I'm here to see Amanda. Emma said to the doorman.

"Yeah, Sure. Go ahead up."

Emma hopped on the elevator and pressed PH for penthouse. When she got there she knocked on the door. She knocked several times until Amanda yelled,

"Hold on a goddamn second."

When Amanda opened the door her face was thinner than usual and she was as pale as a ghost.

"Shit, what happened to you?" Emma asked.

"Oh, I've been sick."

"You should have told me I would have come over another day."

"No, it's okay. I needed to see you. I really haven't seen anyone this past week, because I've been so sick."

"What? You haven't gone to work in a week? That's definitely not like you. How come you didn't tell me you were sick? I would have come over earlier and helped you."

"Well, I thought I'd get over it, but it just seems to get worse. And I'm up all night with this nasty cough."

"Jesus, Amanda you should go see a doctor."

"I have. Maybe you should sit down."

"Well, what did the doctor say?"

Emma couldn't stop staring at her. She saw her two weeks ago, right before she and Nick and the twins left for Aspen. She looked nothing like this. The last time she saw her she had her blond curly hair up in a French twist and was dressed in that crazy multicolored sweater she wears with her black leather pants.

Emma sat restlessly on her sticky black leather couch. She knew something was wrong, she could see it in Amanda's eyes.

Amanda sat across from her and her hazel eyes welled up with tears.

"What's wrong! You're scaring me Amanda", Emma snapped.

Amanda broke down her whole entire body was shaking uncontrollably. Emma sat next to her, and held her until she could talk through her sobs.

"I'm so embarrassed," Amanda whispered through her tears.

Emma knew something was wrong because Amanda was never ashamed. She had never acted defenseless before.

"Why? Why? You know, I'd never judge you. Please, tell me what's wrong?"

"I've tested HIV Positive."

"What! No, are you sure?"

"Yes, do you think I would make something like this up?"

"No, but it just doesn't seem possible."

"What, doesn't seem possible?" Amanda shrieked. "I've been whoring around since college. I could never make a commitment to anyone. Now, I'm gonna die alone!"

"Stop, that! Are you absolutely positive? I don't get it, didn't you use condoms?"

"Of, course I did, ever since I started hearing about all these diseases and AIDS bullshit. But, you know that we never knew about this shit in college. Oh my God, I must have gotten it at Harvard."

"When I first got tested I thought that they must have screwed up on my test results. So, I made another appointment to get

it done again. I mean that was over ten years ago that I had sex without a condom. Before my appointment I started feeling sick. I thought I had a real bad cold. But, I just got the test results back yesterday from the second test, and they revealed that I am definitely HIV positive."

"Amanda, I just can't believe it. Have you told anyone else?"

"No, you're the first, she yelped through her tears."

"Well, Amanda, you know I'll always be here for you. You can move in with Nick and me. You're not always going to be sick. You'll have some bad days and some good days. You can't give up, that's not like you at all."

Emma tried so hard to sound confident and strong, but she couldn't believe how Amanda was letting this take over her life so suddenly after finding out she was HIV positive, rather than fighting it. Emma put her long fingers through her black hair and put her head down and wept. Amanda put her arm around her and their emotions flowed through the room like a wild river.

As Amanda was holding Emma she started to think about what her life would have been like if she had lived her it differently. She thought to herself that she didn't know any other way. She didn't really know how to love anyone enough to have made a commitment. She watched her mother have several one night stands and different boyfriends. She did not live a traditional family life-style. Emma wanted to blame her mother, her upbringing, but she truly knew that the only person she needed to blame was herself.

She wondered if she had married Brian after they graduated Harvard, if her life would have had some purpose. If that had happened she would most likely be living in a cul-de-sac with babies running around. That's not what she wanted. She wanted the late nights spent at clubs, drinking her scotch. There was nothing more she loved to do after a long day at work, then go to the clubs and pick up the artsy types. Those artsy types, they would always come home with her and they would have kinky sex all night long.

She did have some regrets but she knew that was the only way she could have lived her life. Amanda knew she had to stop feeling sorry for herself because she had lived her life the way she had wanted to, and was paying the price of it now. That thought calmed her and made her feel more at ease.

Wings

by Thomas Joyce

I heard a voice that said "follow me," and then I woke. As I was lying there I tried to make sense of the dream I just had, but 1001 Dream Interpretations couldn't put my young, inquisitive mind at ease. After I got dressed, I went downstairs, made some toast, grabbed my lunch, and walked up the street to Mr. Randolphs' dead cornfield, where I could spend the day throwing my toy gliders around. The reason I call the cornfield dead is because corn hasn't grown there since Randolph died of a heart attack in the middle of the field two summers ago. Mr. Randolph would always chase me out when he would catch me in there throwing my gliders around. Even though he is gone, I still think that he's watching over the field. For one reason or another I feel that he is one of the crows that I always see flying around the cornfield, guarding it from trespassers.

It was a beautiful summer day. The sun was shining, there were scattered cumulus clouds, and a breeze just strong enough to take my gliders for a long ride. It was a great day for flying. I practiced loop de loops with my biplane, air-slicing aerobatics with my jetfire, and long flights with my starfire. Slightly larger than the jetfire, the starfire could fly the length of the cornfield if the wind was right. During my lunch break of baloney and cheese with mustard on wonderbread, I was watching the crows fly around the cornfield and play with each other. They reminded me of that John Wayne movie "The Flying Leathernecks." One crow would bump another while in mid-air. The crow that was hit would fold its wings up and start to fall, like it was shot out of the sky. Just before the crow would slam into the ground, it would extend its wings and skim the surface, within inches of the prickly, dead stalks. The other thing I noticed was the similarity between the way my gliders and the crows would land. If my glider would land in a nose up position, it would have a soft landing. The crows always had soft landings. When they landed they would arch their head back to set themselves up for a landing on their feet, and then they would arch their wings about fifteen degrees. After lunch I threw the gliders around again. It's so easy to become lost in the beauty of flight. I spent the rest of the afternoon flying; I'd throw the biplane and it would bank left then the wind might catch it and make it go up or down. Then it might bank to the right, turn upside-down to rightside-up, and come to a soft landing right at my feet.

It was now getting late and I wanted to get home. As I was walking down the dirt road that leads to the main street, I saw Mrs.

Randolph. The instant I saw her I turned around and headed for the woods. "I don't think she saw me," I thought. Then I heard her calling me "Kevin, Kevin, Please come out. I know you're hiding in the woods."

"Oh great," I whispered.

"Kevin Please come out; there's something that I wanted to talk to you about." I don't know why, but I felt like she wasn't going to yell; something in the tone of her voice told me that it would be O.K..

"You know Kevin, I've been watching you fly those gliders ever since you first came into the cornfield. Don't you have any friends at school that you can hang around with?"

"No, not really, everybody teases me because I like to be by myself and play with toys. They call me 'Little Kevi Wevi.' I can't think of any better friends than the wind, the clouds, the crows, and my gliders. You're not mad at me for using the cornfield, are you?"

"No, I'm not mad at you."

"Are you sure, because Mr. Randolph always chased me out."

"Kevin for you to understand why my husband chased you out, you first need to know that he was a pilot at one time."

"Hah. Old man Randolph, a flyer, you're kidding." Instantly I realized what I had said. "I'm real sorry, I didn't mean it. What did he fly?"

"That's O.K., He used to fly P-38's in World War II. Mr. Randolph was so in love with flying, he often described it as a religious experience. It made him sad that in order to learn to fly he also had to learn to kill. After the war he tried to fly for himself, but he couldn't stop thinking of all the men he had killed; every time he would go up, he said he envisioned everyone that had died by his hands. Eventually he gave it up completely."

"That's so awful, but why did he chase me out of the cornfield?"

"He was upset at himself for quitting and upset at you for using the cornfield as a vehicle for capturing the spirit of flight. When he wasn't busy chasing you around he would sit out on the back porch and watch you for hours. He even said to me "you know Lorraine, that kid has got it. No matter how many times I chase him out, he always comes back; he is lost in the spirit of flight. The way that he stares at those things is amazing; he spends all day in there flying around. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if one day he became a pilot; I only hope that he does it for the right reasons." He always wanted to talk to you, but he was a very coarse man and couldn't express his feelings very well. He did like you Kevin."

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. The old man really liked me? I continued to walk with Mrs. Randolph. When we got to

her house she asked me if I would like to come in. I was a bit startled by the invitation at first, but I thought she was a nice old lady so I said O.K. I only hoped that she didn't offer me any cookies. I'm never sure if I'm minding my manners, or eating too fast or too slow. Did I just talk with my mouth open? All right, just relax it would be O.K. just as long as she didn't offer me oatmeal cookies. They make me gag.

As I choked down the oatmeal cookies, I thought I was swallowing broken pieces of cement. It was so grainy and gritty, I thought my throat was bleeding. We continued to talk and she told me how she met Mr. Randolph and asked me about my interests. When she started to ramble on about nothing, I began to look for pauses in her sentences where I could say "Well it was very nice talking to you, bye now." Just as I was about to interject, she cut me off and said "Oh I almost forgot, I have something for you."

"Oh great," I thought, "more oatmeal cookies," but she took me to the attic.

As we climbed the old creaking staircase I noticed footprints worn into the dust, as if the only cleaning the stairs saw were the slippers on Mrs. Randolph's feet. Attics are always filled with memories. I wondered if Mrs. Randolph made frequent trips to the attic to remember her husband. Once we got to the top of the stairs, Mrs. Randolph opened the door. She opened it slowly and solemnly, like she was entering a church. She told me to wait there. From what I could see, the attic was filled with every memory. They weren't in boxes though, everything was out in the open. I saw a wedding dress, an old bed, photo albums, tons of old clothes, a baby's crib, and the floor was carpeted. I thought it was kind of weird to see an attic carpeted. Also the attic was much more clean than the downstairs. I watched her go over to what looked like a chest of some kind. It had pictures and other knick-knacks on it. She grabbed an item from the chest and walked over to me and closed the door. The light was left on.

Once we got downstairs Mrs. Randolph held out her hand and said "Kevin, these are Mr. Randolph's wings and I think that he would want you to have them."

"Oh," I stammered, "I couldn't take those, they belong to him." She cut me off again. "Kevin, every pilot needs his wings. I won't take no for an answer!"

"But I'm not a pilot; I'm just kid!"

"Kevin don't doubt yourself." She pinned the wings to my shirt. "You have a gift. Mr. Randolph has seen it and I have seen it; you're going to be great, please take them."

"All right," I said. "Thank you very much." As I was walking down the steps to the street she called me. "Kevin, have faith, you're going to do just fine." I heard what she said, but I didn't

really understand, so I just said thank you, waved, and walked on.

I didn't know what to think of the day's events; everything happened so fast. When I woke up this morning Randolph was still a jerk in my mind, then his wife tells me that he really liked me and wanted me to have his wings. When I got home I found a note from my mom and dad, reminding me that they were gone for the weekend and who to call in case of an emergency and what there was to eat. I didn't feel like eating. I had way too much on my mind and I just wanted to lie down. I went up to my room, put the tarnished silver wings on my nightstand, and fell onto my bed. I stared at the wings for I don't know how long, just thinking about Randolph and his plane and what Mrs. Randolph said.

That night I had a dream, a dream where I was walking. All that I could see were my legs and the black pavement I was walking on. When the dream allowed me to look up, I saw the biggest crow that I had ever seen. It was over seven feet tall, which meant its wingspan had to be about twenty feet. I crept slowly behind the enormous crow so as not to scare it. "If I could just get close enough," I thought. "I could jump on his back and go for a ride." Anything was possible.

Just as I was ready to pounce, I sneezed. The crow turned around.

"Ahhh! What are you trying to do Kevin, give me a heart attack?"

"Excuse me," I said. "How do you know my name?"

"Kevin my friend, I know everything about you."

"Are you God, Oh God, I'm not dead am I?"

"No, your not dead, and I'm not God, but I am a spirit. I see you every day in the cornfield. Hop on, there's something I want to show you."

I may be young, but I'm not stupid. I know better than to argue with a nine foot crow. I grabbed ahold of my new friend's silken black feathers. He gave a mighty flap of his wings and we were off. As I looked down I noticed that the place that we took off from was the airport that was in the neighboring town. We raced through the nighttime clouds and out to the coastline. I couldn't believe how black it was. There were scattered lights along the coastline but beyond it there was nothing. If the old maritime explorers ever came to the end of the earth, this is what they would find.

"Why are you here?" I asked.

"Why do you think I'm here?"

"Well, according to my dream book, when we are involved with one particular activity during the day we will more than likely dream about it because its the freshest idea in our subconscious."

"That's a pretty good analysis, Do you always dream about

flying."

"Yes."

"There's your answer."

"I don't think I follow you."

"Last week it rained all week long. You didn't fly for that whole time. I'm willing to bet that you dreamed about flying every night."

"Yeah, I did."

"See, you think about flying even when you're not flying. You're lost in the spirit of flight."

"Hey, Mrs. Randolph said that to me earlier today."

"I know." We banked hard left.

"You're not just here to tell me that I dream about flying are you."

"No, I wanted to show you how great it can be to fly."

"I'm not a bird; I can't fly like this."

"I know, but do you see what I mean? Do you see how freeing it is?"

"I do. I'm above all of the filth in the world! The wind is blowing in my face, and I think that's my house over there."

"Good eyes Kevin; I want to show you something else."

We banked hard right and the scene changed. I was now chasing the sunset in a biplane, alongside of me was my new friend in his own plane. He had taken human form.

"Hey Kevin, how do you like it?"

"It's great, It's the most amazing thing in the world!"

"Give it some right rudder and move the stick to the right. The pedal for the rudder is on the floor to your right."

"Yeahh-hooo!" The biplane cut a hard and fast turn to the right. It was like being your own rollercoaster.

"Excellent Kevin, excellent. Now level off and give it full throttle. The throttle is orange and to your right; have you got it?"

"Yeah I got it."

"Good, now when I say go, you pull that control stick hard towards you... GO!"

"Yeahhh-Ha-Ha-Ha. Wooh-hoooh." The plane went straight up and around. A complete loop-de-loop.

"Randolph, this is incredible!!" I gasped and caught my breath. Was it really him?

"Now you know Kevin, you're a pilot now. I'll always be with you." And with that, he was gone. I was now alone with my plane, like it was in the beginning.

I cut my power and dropped down to tree-top level. I then put my power back in, and cut some zigzag turns in just above the trees. I was really moving. I banked to the left and then to the right and back again. I was so free. I had broken out of the gravity jail that

had held me prisoner. I never wanted to wake up.

When I woke it was 11:00am. "I was flying for twelve hours." I was disappointed, it was only a dream. I lay in bed and consulted my dream book. Again, there was no explanation. I eventually got up and got dressed, and pinned the wings on my shirt. I jumped on my bike and went for a ride. I had no clue as to where I was going. I just wanted to ride and think. I thought about flying, Mr. and Mrs. Randolph, and tried to make sense of the whole thing. After about two hours of riding around, I found myself down by the local airport. There was a sign. It said White Hills Municipal Airport. Underneath it said Lessons, Charters, and Scenic Rides. I went inside to see if I could take a ride.

"Hi, I was wondering if I could take a scenic ride."

"Sure you can. It costs fifteen dollars for a half hour and twenty-five for an hour."

My heart sank. "I only have five dollars."

"Sorry kid, why don't you get some money from your parents and come back tomorrow."

"My parents are away; isn't there anything I can do? I really want to go up."

"No, I'm sorry."

"All right, thanks anyway."

As I turned around and headed for the door, a voice from behind a flying magazine said, "If you help me wash my plane, I'll take you up."

"Sure, I will!"

"Great," said the man, "My name's Jack. What do they call you?" We headed out the door.

"Kevin."

"Have you ever done any flying before Kevin."

"No, but I like to jump off of the swings at school."

He let out a little laugh. "Well that's good enough. Why don't you climb in, get comfortable, and throw on your seatbelt. I'll be there as soon as I preflight the plane."

There was a radio, a compass, and many different dials and switches. It looked so complicated. When Jack climbed in I asked him "how do you not get confused with all of the different dials and switches?"

"Lots and lots of practice. This gauge here is the altitude indicator, It tells you your relationship to the horizon. This one here is called the vertical speed indicator, it tells you how many feet per minute you're climbing or descending. All of the instruments have a specific purpose. When you understand how each instrument works flying becomes more enjoyable. You become part of the aircraft." Jack turned on the radio and we listened to the information. Jack explained to me that the reason we have to listen to the radio is so

we can get the correct runway, wind, and atmospheric information. I listened to him carefully when he called the control tower: "White Hills Tower, this is Sundowner, 5-8-4 Echo Bravo, at Eastide Aviation, with information Romeo."

"Roger, 8-4 Echo Bravo, proceed to runway one-six."

"8-4 Echo Bravo, will proceed."

I thought that the lingo was something in itself. I asked Jack about what he just said. He told me that 5-8-4 Echo Bravo was the number of the plane, similar to a license plate on a car. As we moved down the taxiway we talked a bit more. He thought that flying out by the coastline would look interesting. "Fine," I said. "I'm just happy to be able to go up." Once we got down to the designated runway, Jack went through the run-up. He said that the reason we do this is to make sure that all of the instruments are functioning properly. Once he finished that, he moved to a spot just short of the runway and called the control tower again.

"White Hills Tower, this is Sundowner 5-8-4 Echo Bravo, holding short of one-six. We'd like a left turn out."

"Roger, 8-4 Echo Bravo. Hold short landing traffic."

"8-4 Echo Bravo, holding short."

"We're going to wait a minute until this guy lands. Watch how graceful it is when he comes in."

I thought to myself how similar this plane looks to my gliders and to the crows when they land.

"5-8-4 Echo Bravo, left turn out approved, cleared for takeoff."

"8-4 Echo Bravo, cleared for takeoff."

Cleared for takeoff. What a wonderful phrase. Jack gave it full throttle and the engine grew progressively louder. Within seconds of being cleared we were airborne. I looked out the window; everything was getting smaller. Jack said that we would be flying at 2,500 feet. He pointed out some of the surrounding towns, ponds, and lakes. As we reached our designated altitude, I thought to myself; how great it must be to do this all of the time, Jack has got to be one of the luckiest people in the world." We continued in silence for a few minutes while I took in the view. When I looked over to ask him a question, I saw something that made me fear for my life. Jack was out cold, I didn't know if he was dead or if he had just fainted.

"Jack!, JACK!, Wake up please. This is no time for a nap!" There was no response. I immediately grabbed the control wheel. I pulled back too much and the plane went up. I felt a weird sensation in my stomach. When I pushed it forward the plane fell like a stone. Again I had another strange sensation in my stomach. It was like falling in a dream. Once I had control and the plane was level, I picked up the microphone and called the control tower.

"WHITE HILLS TOWER!!, WHITE HILLS TOWER!!, Please help. I have an emergency."

"Go ahead unidentified aircraft!"

"I'm on a scenic flight with a guy named Jack and he's not moving!"

"He's not moving? Is he conscious?"

"Uhh, his eyes are closed."

"O.K., Is your aircraft number 5-8-4 Echo Bravo? If you don't know, look on the instrument panel, it should be next to the radio!"

"Yeah it is, 5-8-4 Echo Bravo."

"O.K. Good What's your name?"

"Kevin."

"Kevin, my name is Dave I'm going to lead you back to the airport. O.K., The first thing that I want you to do is to change the frequency on the radio so it reads 125.8. Turn the knob one click to the right. I'll talk to you on that frequency."

I changed the channel.

"Dave are you there? Come in."

"I'm right here Kevin. O.K., You're approximately fifteen minutes away from the airport at an altitude of 2,300 feet. The first thing that you need to do is turn around. The airport is directly behind you. Make a gradual turn to the left, keep your turn in until you are going in the opposite direction. Do you understand?"

"Yes, make a turn to the left and keep turning until I'm going in the opposite direction."

I ever so carefully started to make my turn. The plane slowly rolled around to the left; I was now on my way back.

"Dave come in; I've made the turn."

"All right Kevin, good job. Do you see a green flashing light ahead of you?"

"Yes I do."

"O.K., That's me in the tower. Now you know where I am. How do you feel?"

It was kind of funny, my life was in great danger and I felt fine. I was shaking, but I wasn't scared. The sky was bright blue and the sun was shining. When I looked out of the window I saw birds below me. It was unreal. I was flying higher than the birds.

"I feel alright. What do you want me to do next?"

"I want you to start reducing your altitude. There is a gauge on the instrument panel that looks like a clock. That's your altimeter. It tells you how high up you are. Do you see it?"

"Yes, does it say 2,200 feet?"

"It sure does, congratulations, you've already lost one-hundred feet! The next thing that I want you to do is to start reducing power, this will help you to come down easier. Your throttle is a

black handle coming out of the instrument panel. Pull it towards you about an inch and tell me what the RPM's read. The RPM gauge is just above the throttle and says RPM on it."

I pulled the throttle back. The engine went from a loud hum to a low buzz.

"Dave, the RPM says twenty."

"O.K., 2,000 that's right where you want to be. Start to push the control wheel forward a bit. You're looking for 1,000 feet.

As I descended, I thought about how Randolph and his widow had faith in me. They both felt that I was going to be great. Well, I am definitely doing something great. How many people get to do this? I remembered the dream that I had where Randolph taught me to fly. All of my own predictions of flight had been correct so far, why should I stop at a dream? I decided that the next turn I made, I would use the rudder. I wanted to have the same feelings that I had the night before. I wanted to cut through the wind like a razor.

"O.K., Kevin start to level off. You're going to make a turn to your right and parallel runway one- six. Once I had leveled off and checked my altimeter for the correct altitude, I began my right turn. Slowly I turned the control wheel and gradually applied pressure to the right rudder. I cut a turn in the air so precise that Dave commented on it. He thought I was flying like a professional and that I didn't need his help anymore. I told him to stick around.

"O.K. Kevin you are currently at 1,000 feet, and on your downwind leg. You will be landing very soon. What I want you to do now is to look over to your left at the gauge that says airspeed indicator, and tell me the color of the arc that the needle is in."

As I leaned over I glanced at Jack and hoped that he would survive. For the brief time that I knew him, I could see that he was as passionate about flying that I was. I hoped he'd be O.K..

"Dave, the needle is in the white arc."

"Good, your flaps are on the floor to your left. Pull them up until you hear one click and then begin a downward left turn."

I Clicked my flaps and made my turn. I thought to myself how turning kind of make you feel graceful. It's so easy to get lost in that kind of movement, so slow and subtle, as if to say, "I'll land when I'm ready," just like you were a bird.

"Excellent turn Kevin, You're on your base leg now. Reduce your power until the RPM's read 1,500 or, as you say, 15. The next thing that I want you to do is to add one more notch of flaps and continue your descent. You're currently at 700 feet, one more turn to the left and you're on final approach with clearance to land."

I added my second notch of flaps and reduced my power until the gauge said 15. As I turned final approach, a crow off to my right flew into my line of sight and then moved in front of me. I

grabbed the wings on my shirt and tried to to feel Randolph's presence.

"Kevin, we're going to set you up for landing now. Currently you're at 500 feet, reduce your power so your RPMs' read ten and then add your third notch of flaps."

As I was doing that Dave told me how to handle my landing. I already had a good idea. He said that as I got closer to the runway to progressively reduce my power, and when I felt I was close enough to the runway to cut the power. At that point I was to begin pulling back more on the control wheel, but to be careful not to apply too much pressure too soon.

"Space your movements out evenly," he said "so that just before you land you will have applied full pressure." He told me to land with nose up and to make sure I let the nose of the aircraft come down on its own, not to force it down. "If you force it down the aircraft will bounce on its nosewheel and eventually crash at the end of the runway," Dave warned. "If the aircraft bounces give it full power and we'll fly the same pattern again. Just remember to keep the nose up. Also if you look to the end of the runway while your coming down it will help you to focus on your landing better."

I glanced at the altimeter; it said 150 feet. The crow was still in front of me. If this was Randolph, I was going to fly with him today. Once the runway was made, I cut the power. I started to gradually pull back on the control wheel, and as I made my way over the runway I could feel the wind gently teasing the plane. The nose of the plane had that "up" attitude that Dave told me to look for. As we were sinking to the ground, I told Jack he was going to be O.K.. Just before we touched down, the crow had flown away, I followed his every movement all of the way in.

The day that I had my first solo flight was twenty-two years ago. There isn't one day that goes by that I don't think of it, because every day that I come home from work I put my shining wings next to Randolph's tarnished ones.



I Don't Need You

by Kim Porcello

I woke up this morning feeling different,
rejuvenated from a good night's sleep
Because, for once, thoughts of you left me
and, closing my eyes, I found peace.

You see, today I realized something,
Something that I have denied for so long.
I am a fool for tolerating your lies and
for getting used to being strung along.

The deceit that you put between us
has ultimately severed our bond.
Now I will push you out of my heart,
the place where you once belonged.

You see, my dear, I have decided
that leaving you is what I must do.
After years of heartache and sorrow,
today I know I don't need you.

Death Of The Goddess

by Curtiss B. Hickcox III

The sweat on Conrad's brow grew heavy as he hauled the sixty-five pound danforth anchor off its mount and let it slowly rest on the deck of Freyia. The vessel bucked back and forth in its slip as the waves made their way into the protected harbor. He thought to himself "man, this is the fourth hurricane to hit St. Thomas in the past month." The sweat from his brow now dripped into his eyes making him stop his work to wipe his face with the bandanna from his back pocket.

As Conrad took a break to wipe his brow he looked around and counted to himself "one, two, three, to go" almost done with his day's work of moving all thirty boats out of the Sapphire Beach marina to weather the upcoming hurricane in a local harbor nearby. His diligent work felt like sailing single handed around the world in a day. He carefully placed each boat in the harbor as to not endanger any of them if one were to break loose during the torrent of wind and water that was fast approaching.

The stout looking double ended cutter that Conrad was standing on was owned by a hard core offshore seaman that lived up north. The vessel was named Freyia, after the Norse goddess of raw love. The name was appropriate, for the boat was the toughest offshore boat, built with a huge bulging hull that tapered to two dull points at both the bow and stern. Its massive barn door rutter curled over the bull work of the stern and narrowed into a varnished cherry tiller that is at least eight feet long. The vanish at the end of the tiller was warn thin from many a long watch with both hands steady on the stick. The rigging and sails were also heavy duty and they had weathered many a storm before this.

Conrad slipped the heavy lines from their cleats and he slowly maneuvered the intrepid warrior into the fairway of the marina. Putting the gear shift into the forward position the undaunted diesel stalled as to almost signify hesitation but as always with a rise in r.p.m. the vessel gained momentum towards the breakwater where the crystal blue waters of the Caribbean were turning into what looked like a torrent of white foam.

Breaking through the waves on his way to the protected harbor Conrad thought, "what if this were to be the one that tops Hugo?" The destruction from Hugo was still fresh in his mind. The roof from a local school in his back yard. Conrad's mind was racing by now. The reports he'd received said that this one had the potential to escalate and surpass the strength of Hugo. Even if this were the one, Conrad knew that his boats were safe. He had doubled the

scopes on all the anchor lines and doubled the weight on all the anchors themselves. Conrad knew he had to find a good spot for Freyia for she was the heaviest of all the boats he had moored that day. She was a well-equipped boat, fitted with several other complimentary anchors that would assist the already oversized danforth in its job of holding on to the fine crystalline sand that lay on the ocean floor.

Heaving the danforth, then scampering from the bow over the dog house and back to the cockpit was a tricky thing to do but Conrad had been at this all day. Reaching the cockpit he eased the gearshift into reverse to set the first of the three anchors. Repeating each step with precision he set the three anchors and when done he braced himself on the boom gallows and stared eastward at the almost black sky. Knowing he had several more boats to draft for battle he jumped into the seaworthy inflatable, and turned the ignition key. He slipped the tether from Freyia's aft cleat, leading the line through the hauz pipe. He let it fall into the bow of the dink, and with a quick glance at the dauntless Freyia, he laid out the throttle of his launch and skipped across the waves back to his work at Sapphire. And there she sat, a battle ax among a quiver of sleek arrows. Among the boats that surrounded her some were of comparable size but none had the two and a half inch thick hull that she boasted from her breast. Most of the boats were smaller, shorter, lesser ocean going vessels than she.

As Freyia sat, and the wind grew stronger, she held on with effortless poise and elegance. The only thing that could go wrong is another boat would break loose and hit her. Conrad now done with his day's work. Went to his office. From there he could see the palms being blown side ways in the unstoppable wind. Knowing that his boats were safe he did not think of the other boats that could possibly squeeze their way to the shallows at the head of the harbor.

The captain of the party catamaran Pretty Lady had figured that since his vessel drew half that of the larger yachts he could push his way eastward to the head of the harbor. Dropping both of his meager anchors he blindly crossed his fingers thinking "these will hold, it'll only blow for an hour or two."

The Pretty Lady bucked the waves for one hour before she started to drag her two twenty pound plow style anchors. The added movement of the dragging anchors made the anchor lines chafe until they could not keep fast. In no time the Pretty lady was gaining speed toward the opening of the harbor. She went through the harbor like a defensive tackle sacking everything in her way, and there lay the quarterback, Freyia.

The port side hull of the Pretty Lady first picked off Freyia's

bow sprit which included the Samson's post were all three anchor rodees were made fast. The Pretty Lady spun two hundred seventy degrees and the stern of the starboard hull punched a hole in the her hardy side. Now stripped of the lines holding her Freyia made her way along side the Pretty Lady to the open bay where the waves have been blown tall by the relentless wind. Wounded and floundering in the open bay Freyia is blown to her final resting place where with fierce fury the surf pounded her into the rocks until there was nothing but a sixty foot mast tossed on the shore like a twig

Knowing that he could do nothing, Conrad watched in horror as the boat known as the goddess was destroyed before his very eyes. Several hours after the hurricane had passed, Conrad went back out into the still rough water to inspect and identify the remains of Freyia. "Not much left" he thought to himself as he put the launch in reverse so as to not put himself in danger of getting sucked into the pounding surf. His view was from afar but he knew that there was no hope for the only true seafaring goddess.



Daddy's Little Girl

by Kristina Arria

My father left when I was twelve years old. I knew he was not coming home from work that day by the way he kissed me goodbye.

My parents were never the affectionate type. Often times my father would come home from work three hours late and tell my mother he was working overtime. The first couple of times she believed him. Then it started becoming a routine and she grew suspicious.

My mother started calling his office and finding out that he was leaving work at five o'clock. When he finally decided to come home from wherever he truly was my mother was there waiting for him. I would sit in my room and listen with the door edged open.

Just as he would open the door, she would be standing there ready to interrogate him. Like his routine lateness, so were his answers. I can remember their last fight as if it were yesterday.

"Where have you been?" she yelled.

In a startled voice he answered, "I had to work overtime."

"Again? It's eight o'clock! You got out of work three hours ago!" Sometimes when she got really worked up she would throw things at him. Usually whatever was in reach of where she was standing.

"I was at a meeting." His voice rising this time.

"A meeting? Why wouldn't your secretary say that you were at a meeting?" She, never let her eyes off his.

Nervously he answered, "I was in a rush, I must have forgotten to mention it to her on my way out." Now he was getting angry. "God woman! What are you thinking? I've been working my ass off for this family and you have the audacity to question my whereabouts!" As he was yelling, he started pointing in her face.

Just then she picked up the candleholder that was sitting upon the piano and threw it across the room. He tried to duck, but it grazed the side of his head.

"You're insane! I don't have to take this from you!" Blood trickled down his red inflamed cheek. I heard the huge bang so I ran to the balcony. As he made his way to the bathroom he kept mumbling words. My mother just fell back into the sofa, her hands clenched to her face as she cried.

I remember wanting so much just to hug her. Instead, I went back to my room, shut the door, and blared my radio. I guess I wanted them to know I knew what was going on without having to talk to them.

When he left I think my mother had it in her head that he was coming back. I knew that he was gone for good, even though in my heart, I wish he wasn't.

I used to think it was all my fault. Maybe he didn't love me enough or maybe he didn't even want me. My mother tried to

reassure me time and time again that it had nothing to do with me. I tried my hardest to believe her.

It was hard to believe her when she was half in the bag. You see, after he left she started drinking. She seemed to be happy when she was drunk. I hated to see her sad so I figured I wouldn't stop her.

At night she would come to room and sit in the rocking chair that he had made me. Thinking I was asleep, she would ramble on about how much my father loved me and how the first day they took me home he held me the entire day. Everything she could remember him ever saying about me, she would babble about. Pretending to be asleep, I would roll over and pull the covers over my head so that she wouldn't see the tears roll down my face. Even when I wasn't sleeping she would tell me how much he loved me.

It always amazed me how she could say all these great things about a complete asshole. I suppose she figured that if she said bad things about him I might have resented her too. Maybe I would have, who knows?

I've come to realize her pain in not having the man she loved by her side anymore. I don't know if I could ever go on without Doug.

My wedding day was the only day after my father left where I remember her being happy and not drinking. Oh, then there was the birth of our son, Michael. It's ironic. I named him after his grandfather, yet he is the most beautiful creature I've ever seen.

It's been twenty three years since then. My mother passed away five years ago today. The doctors say she died of alcoholism. I say she died of depression. I guess it doesn't matter. All I know is she is not here with me.



A Strange Dark Place

by Rebecca Berger

I woke up in a strange dark place. There were no lights on and the windows behind me were covered with dark sheets. There were little beams of light coming from a few holes in the sheets. I could barely see in the room I was in. There was not much light but from what I could see I was in some sort of attic. There was a cold draft coming from the window. Is it winter time? Ten thousand questions pop in and out of my head. I can't move my arms or legs, guess they had tied me up. I could hear faint voices from below. They sounded very random and I couldn't even make out specific words.

I'm not scared any more. I have been here so long. I guess I can get use to routine. They have already done everything you could imagine to me. I just let them do what they want, it's easier that way; they seem to be a little more gentle with me if I don't fight. I used to put up a fight, but I then I learned to free myself of the pain. I learned to escape from the present and dream about the future. Leave my body and manipulate my mind. God, how long have I been here? It feels like years.

I wonder what happened to my sister? She is so small and helpless. I'm scared for her. I think I might have heard her voice a few days ago, but I'm not too sure. If they did try and hurt her or molest her in some way, like they have been doing to me, I hope she was knocked out or even killed because that kind of pain and memory will never leave her side even years after.

I have gone through pain like this before. I think that's why I can deal so well with this now. Or maybe I don't care anymore. Who knows? I can remember one time when I was around three years old my Mother left me in the food store. She did not mean to leave me there. That was when my Mom was on a lot of drugs so I forgave her for leaving me. I was in the store and some perverted man saw me alone and asked me if I wanted to go get a soda. My Mom always talked to strangers on the street, either asking for money or just drugs. So I thought this man was O.K.. Mom never told me not to talk to strangers. He took me around the back of the store and started to unbutton my overalls. It was cold outside and I asked him what he was doing. He said, "Little girl, you know why you are here, now stay still, I'm sure you will like what I'm about to do." He then put his cold fingers down my underwear. I started to scream. He told me to shut up. He then jabbed his fingers inside me. It hurt so much. I guess I was screaming pretty loud because I heard someone say, "is everything O.K.!" The sick perverted man looked up and the ran

away. I was left torn and bloody. A woman came out and helped me. All she did was call my Mom. No police, no doctor. When my Mom came and claimed me, she just took me home and I took a bath while she passed out on the couch.

Years later, I was in high school and the class saw a film on rape in Sex Ed class, and I freaked out. I was sent to the school shrink. Within two years of seeing this women at school this memory finally busted back into my mind like a bullet shot in my brain. I am very happy that I can deal with that part of my life now. I realized it was not my fault. Now as I lay tied up, I think of how this whole disgusting horrible ordeal will effect my sister. Years later will she go through the same suicidal stage? Will she rebel and try anything to hurt anyone around her? God, if I get out of this sick mess I will dedicate all my time into helping her through this chaos and confusion.

I'm surprised I have not lost my head. I'm surprised I have not started to talk to my foot or something. I guess that's a good thing. I've been raped, cut, shaved, tortured, humiliated and pissed on. All of that and I'm still pretty stable. God I'm almighty. I am the shit. How could someone go through all of this and still be sane? God only knows.

I guess throughout my life I've had to be strong. I have dealt with a lot throughout the years. The two men downstairs are gross. There must be some chemical imbalance in their brains because no human being that I know would ever put another human being through this. I have to give the men credit. They give me water every day. Food on the other hand I don't see very often, a few pieces of bread here and there. I remember someone telling me once about how if you don't eat or have any water for a long time you start to hallucinate. I am so happy I don't fall into that category. I would really want to die if I started to hear or see things. At least I have my sanity.

The men have not bothered me in a long time. I know they go out everyday for about.... well I don't have a watch so I go by the shadows on the wall. They leave when the light hits the third plank on the wall. They come back when the light is somewhere in the middle of the ceiling. Pretty clever, right? I told you I've been here forever. Anyway, there have been three things I have noticed in the past.... well... I can't say days but, the light has gone around the room almost twice, and I have not heard a car pull up or any kind of noise. That's the first thing I have noticed. Second, they left a usually large amount of water for me. Third, I'm getting out of here!!!

I can't see my hands. All I know is that my hands are tied together, and I'm guessing they are tied to the bed I am lying on. I

can feel that they used some sort of cloth to tie around my hands. It's soft like a T-shirt, I have to get lose!! I pull my hands toward me, I here a rip. Shit, is it going to be that easy? I pull and pull, harder and harder, God the ripping sound just gives me so much strength. The bed starts to rock back and forth. It sounds like someone is banging on the floor with a hammer. I'm going to be in deep shit if those fuckers are still here. Come on, rip! !! My hands have to come free!!! PULL, PULL!!!!

What happened? My head is throbbing. Holy shit, I can move my hands! I slowly bring my hands down, I turn my hands so I can see my palms. My fingers are so skinny, and they are covered in a black film. I sit up even slower, I'm so scared I made too much noise. I feel really dizzy. I put my hands on my head and I realize that my hair and head are all wet. I look back down at my hands, blood? What is going on? I wake up, I'm free and there is blood all over the place. Wait a minute, the bed. It's on a big incline. Ohhh, I see now, I broke the bed, and the headboard fell, set my hands free and cut my head all at the same fuckin time. Damn, I hope I did not lose a lot of blood. What am I talking about. I'm free!

SARA!!!! SARA!!!! Can you here me? God please let her be all right, please. Wow this place is disgusting. There is no furniture, and pizza boxes everywhere. I don't even have to walk into any rooms because most of the walls in this house have been knocked down. Wait.... I here something, is it a mouse. It's a faint squeeking noise. It's coming from ...I found her! My little sis. Not a scratch? Not lost any weight? Clean?

"Sara, what did those men do to you?"

"Nothing Kellton, I want to go home. How long have we been here?" Did they do anything to you'?

"They did not touch me. They were real nice to me."

"WHAT!! What do you mean?"

"Well they took me to the park every day, and gave me ice cream."

Who the were we dealing with? Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde? This is insane. We need to get out of here before they come back.

"Sara, do you know where they went? "

"Kellton you look so skinny. Your head is so bloody. Are you O.K."

"I'm fine Sara, where did they go?"

"I don't know!!!!"

"Come on we have to run, Sara. You need to run as fast as you can. Can you do that?"

"Yes."

As we ran I looked back at the house. I think back on the events that took place. The sick, disgusting, filthy men. Why didn't

they touch her? Why did they just humiliate me? Why the pain, the torture? I will not rest until they get what they deserve.

I look down at Sara and thank God she did not get hurt, if she only knew what those men were capable of doing.

We ran and ran. I could not even tell you which way or how long it was for. We finally came to a road . There is no way I just going to flag down the fist Joe Shmo that drives down this road. For all I know it could be those two bastards. We stayed in the woods but followed the road. Night was approaching and I was worried about what was going through Sara's head. I asked if she was O.K. and she said yes. We finally reached a gas station. It was closed down but there was a phone booth. We ran right up to it and I picked up the receiver.

"Who should we call Sara? Mom? Dad? They probably don't even realize we're gone. I'll call the police."

Sara looks at me and says "if we call the police they are going to take me away from you. Please Kellton no."

"Sara don't you want a nice home. With your own bed and toys to play with. A backyard where you can play, where there is grass and not drunks and addicts sleeping. You need to be loved."

"I am loved, by you. You take care of me Kellton."

"How am I going to do that? I can't even take care of myself. I'm fifteen years old and I need to have my own childhood. I have never had a life. I have always had to take care of you or Mom. I am still a child myself, Sara. We need help, not from Mom but from the state. They will take better care of us. Care that we have never seen. The best thing for both of us right now is to call the police. I know it's scary but you will thank me later in life, believe me."

As I place the receiver back on the phone I slide down in the booth. A cool wet drip falls down my cheek. Blood? No, a tear. I can finally stop being strong. I can finally let my emotions take over me. I can let it all out. Sara looks up at me and see my tears. Looking at her just makes me cry harder. I look back at her and tell her everything is going to work out.

As I look down the road I can see the flashing lights. "They're here," I say. I try to stand up but have no strength. I look up to final a man standing over me. Sara is clenching on to me and won't let go. As I stare into this man's eyes I feel a warmth rush in my veins. I close my eyes and feel a sense of ease, calmness and I realize I don't have to be almighty anymore. I can be scared, immature, and frustrated and it will be OK, because I human. I have been given a second chance. A new and wonderful life is waiting for me. I have long dreamed of this day.

Graduation

by Jennifer Tramposch

"Mark Abbot," announced the President of the school. Everyone clapped when Mark got up. His whole row stood with him. My stomach dropped down to my feet. I've waited for this day for five years. I should be all excited for the moment but, right now my stomach is twisting and turning. I just hope my breakfast doesn't come up.

Thank God, my last name starts with "T." I have loads of time to sit back and look around at all the parents, family and friends who came out for this special day.

"Nancy Miller," called the President. "Wow! This is going quickly," I thought. I started to look for my family. Dad and Mom could be on separate sides of the tent. I saw mom first. She looked good. She was not smiling, though. Karin and my brother-in-law Johnny were with her. They both smiled and waved. I could feel myself blushing because they were making a big deal of this. I turned to look for Dad. Where is he? I told him where to sit. I can see the spot, but I don't see him. I could feel my stomach start to turn upside down. My eyes scanned the room. My palms were getting all sweaty. What was happening to me? I know he'll be here, I hope. Where is he?

"Ben Queen," called the President. Only three more rows left. I looked even harder for him. I heard a baby cry. It's my niece. She is only three weeks old. Next to her is Kathy, my sister. Bobby and T.J., my twin nephews looked like school boys were waving at me, their Auntie Alex. Dave, who is their father, has the video camera. They all look great and are so happy for me. But Dad's nowhere to be found. What is he thinking? I should have told him to go with Kathy. She always knows where to sit at things like this.

"Stephen Stills," was the next name I heard. I turned to look at the stage to see Steve walk across and I wanted to clap. Then I saw Edward. He had flowers in his hand. I couldn't believe that his parents had come to see me graduate. I guess that's the way things are supposed to be, once you go out with someone for two years.

That's another thing that I have to think about. But it can't be right now? But when? I leave in five days to go home for the summer to make money to move back. What happens if I don't make enough money or I can't find a job here? I'll have to wait and see what happens. We've gone through two summers in different states, one more can't hurt. Or can it? Dad will be able to give me some solid advice, if I can ever find him. Where is that man?

"Melissa Tea," was said and at that moment, my row stood.

I was the last one in the row so I still have time to find my father. He missed my high school graduation because he had a sailing race. He told me he wouldn't go, but how could I not let him? I'll do anything to make Dad happy. I remember saying to him, five years ago, "Don't be ridiculous, Daddy, you have to go." He went, I cried all day long. Everyone thought I was crying for leaving my friends, but all I wanted was my Dad, here, not on the sea.

The person in front of me, went across the stage. I'm next, I thought. Dad! I see him. Right where he's supposed to be. A smile came across my face. My heart's pounding. He really made it!

I told the professor my name, so that the president could say it right. Everything was blurry after that, and until I sat down back at my seat, but I remember shaking the hand of the president and hearing my family shouting for me. The smile on my face was as big as a rainbow turned upside down. As I was walking down the stairs, Dad's flash went off, and then he gave me a bear hug. I should have been embarrassed, but it was my Dad. He was here and I loved it.



Editorial Staff

Co-Editors:	Kristina Arria Kim Porcello
Assistant Editors:	Sara MacGregor Andrea Cisternelli
Layout Editors:	Marnie MacLean Maryann Gallant
Advisor:	Ed Meek